

LIST OF CURRENT CLAIMS

1. (Currently Amended) An apparatus for stretching a weft thread (10) inserted into a weaving shed of a weaving machine, for example in particular in an air-jet weaving machine, characterized in that comprising a thread clamp (22) actuatable by means of a control unit (21) for clamping arranged to clamp the weft thread (10) ~~is provided~~, upstream of which, ~~[[-]]~~ relative the weft thread transporting direction, ~~[[-]]~~ a device is provided (14, 23, 23', 23'') actuatable by ~~means of~~ said control unit (21) for deflecting the weft thread (10) ~~is disposed~~.

2. (Currently Amended) The apparatus according to claim 1, wherein ~~characterized in that~~ the thread clamp (22) and the device for deflecting the weft thread (23, 23', 23'') are disposed next to ~~one another~~ each other on the same side of the shed.

3. (Currently Amended) The apparatus according to claim 1 ~~or 2, characterized in that~~ including at least one weft thread motion detecting device (20) for detecting the motion of a weft thread (10) is provided, wherein the signal of said weft thread motion detecting device which is converted into actuation signals for the thread clamp (22) and the ~~deflector device~~ for deflecting the weft thread (14, 23, 23', 23'').

4. (Currently Amended) The apparatus according to claim 3, including a prewinder weft motion ~~characterized in that~~ a detector (20) of a prewinder (11) ~~serves as that~~ comprises the weft thread motion detecting device, for detecting the motion of the weft thread (10) which detects said prewinder weft motion detector arranged to detect the number of windings of the weft thread (10) drawn off from a prewinder by each weft insertion.

5. (Currently Amended) The apparatus according to claim 1, wherein ~~one of claims 1 through 4, characterized in that~~ the magnitude of a deflection force exerted by of the device (14, 23, 23', 23'') for deflecting the weft thread (10) is adjustable, controllable or regulatable.

6. (Currently Amended) The apparatus according to claim 1, wherein one of claims 1 through 5, characterized in that the course of the deflection force exerted by of the device (14, 23, 23', 23'') for deflecting the weft thread is adjustable or regulatable.

7. (Currently Amended) The apparatus according to claim 1, wherein one of claims 1 through 6, characterized in that two or more deflector devices for detecting the weft thread (14, 23, 23', 23'') are provided between a weft thread stopper (18) and the thread clamp (22).

8. (Currently Amended) The apparatus according to claim 1, including one of claims 1 through 7, characterized in that at least two devices (14, 23, 23') for deflecting the weft thread that are actuatable independently of each other are provided.

9. (Currently Amended) The apparatus according to claim 1, wherein one of claims 1 through 8, characterized in that the beginning and/or the end of the actuation of the thread clamp (22) is variable.

10. (Currently Amended) The apparatus according to claim 1, wherein one of claims 1 through 9, characterized in that the beginning and/or the end of the actuation of the device (14, 23, 23', 23'') for deflecting the weft thread (10) is variable.

11. (Currently Amended) The apparatus according to claim 1, wherein one of claims 1 through 10, characterized in that the thread clamp (22) and the device (14, 23, 23', 23'') for deflecting the weft thread are disposed on a sley of the weaving machine.

12. (Currently Amended) The apparatus according to claim 11, wherein characterized in that the sley carries a reed (15) having a weft guide duct (16), and that the thread clamp (22) and the deflector device for deflecting the weft thread (14, 23, 23', 23'') are disposed along an extension of said weft guide duct.

13. (Currently Amended) The apparatus according to claim 12, wherein characterized in that the elements (36, 37, 38, 36', 37', 42, 43) of the deflector device for deflecting the weft thread (14, 23, 23', 23'') and the elements (34, 35) comprising of

the thread clamp (22) are disposed, in their at-rest position, outside the boundary of the weft thread transport duct (16).

14. (Currently Amended) The apparatus according to claim 1, wherein one of claims 1 through 13, characterized in that the deflector device for deflecting the weft thread comprises (23, 23', 23'') contains, as its actuating device, at least one pneumatic piston-cylinder unit (25, 25', 25'').

15. (Currently Amended) The apparatus according to claim 14, wherein a characterized in that the piston (36, 36', 41) of the piston-cylinder unit (25, 25', 25'') is drivable in both directions with compressed air.

16. (Currently Amended) The apparatus according to claim 14, including or 15, characterized in that a device (33) for detecting the position of the piston (36) of the piston-cylinder unit (25) of the deflector device for deflecting the weft thread (23) is provided.

17. (Currently Amended) The apparatus according to claim 14, including one of claims 14 through 16, characterized in that means that are provided which determine the level of the pressure and/or the variation over time of the pressure that is delivered to the piston-cylinder unit (25, 25', 25'') of the deflector device for deflecting the weft thread (23, 23', 23'').

18. (Currently Amended) The apparatus according to claim 14, wherein one of claims 14 through 17, characterized in that the piston-cylinder unit (25) of the deflector device (23) for deflecting the weft thread is connectable selectively via a switching valve (31) to at least two delivery lines for compressed air.

19. (Currently Amended) The apparatus according to claim 1, including one of claims 1 through 18, characterized in that a pneumatic piston-cylinder unit (24) is provided as comprising the actuating device for the thread clamp (22).

20. (Currently Amended) The apparatus according to claim 19, wherein a ~~characterized in that the~~ piston (35) of the piston-cylinder unit (24) is drivable with compressed air in both directions.

21. (Currently Amended) A method for stretching a weft thread after its insertion into a weaving shed of a weaving machine, ~~in particular for example~~ an air-jet weaving machine, comprising clamping ~~characterized in that~~ the weft thread is ~~clamped~~ at least approximately at the end of the insertion on the side of the shed opposite the insertion side and ~~is then maintained~~ maintaining the inserted weft thread in tension by deflection of the weft thread until it is beaten up.

22. (Currently Amended) The method according to claim 21, including deflecting ~~characterized in that~~ the weft thread is ~~deflected~~ with a force whose magnitude is controllable or regulatable.

23. (Currently Amended) The method according to claim 21 ~~or 22~~, including deflecting ~~characterized in that~~ the weft thread is ~~deflected~~ at a plurality of locations.